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MAD CAVE

DICK TRACY®

#16

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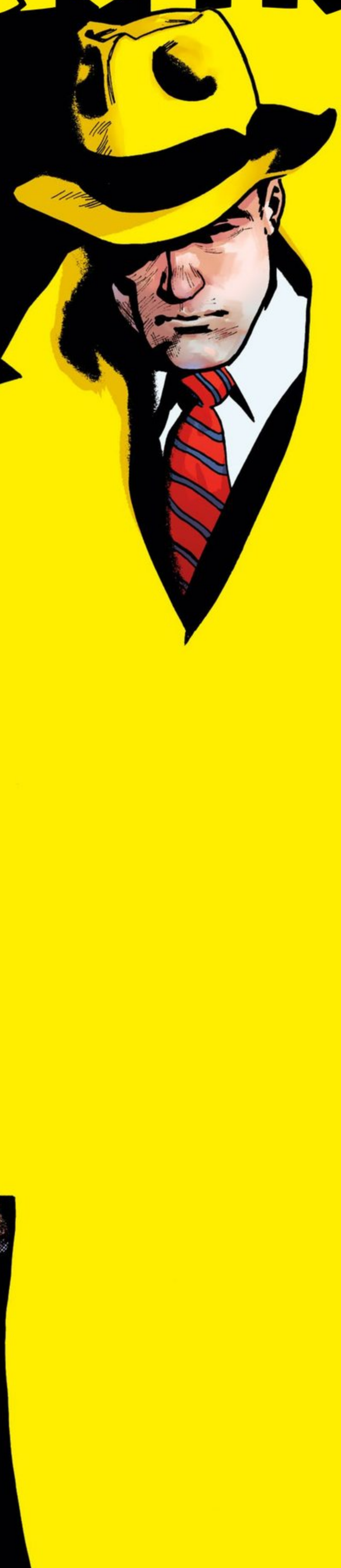

M·ASRAR

#16

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THE CITY.

Y'KNOW, IT'S NICE WHEN THINGS ARE EASY, *RED*--THIS HOOCH AND CIGS WILL NET LIPS A PRETTY PENNY.

GLAD YOU'RE OPTIMISTIC, DUKE. ME? I'LL WAIT AND SEE HOW MUCH A'THOSE PROFITS TRICKLE DOWN TO *US*.

RED, RED, RED...

...YOU GOTTA QUIT WITH YOUR BELLY-ACHIN'. ENJOY IT FOR A SEC--

HUH? Y'HEAR THAT?

BRRRRZZZZZ

BRRRRZZZZZ

YEAH, I HEAR IT--

--AND I SURE AS HELL DON'T LIKE IT!

WE GOTTA GET THE BOYS! TELL ADDIE!

WE'RE SURROUNDED!

THE *HELL* IS GOING ON HERE? YOU BOYS HAVE MADE A *BIG* MISTAKE.

TOO LOUD FOR YA, *ADDIE GOTHORN?* THAT'S A *REAL* SHAME.

NOW, NOW-- WAITASEC, THIS BOAT BELONGS TO *LIPS MANLIS!*

THIS *CITY* BELONGS TO LIPS!

BOSS--RELAX! THEY'RE THE ONES WITH THE GUNS, 'MEMBER?

GET YER MITTS OFF ME, RED--THIS IS AGAINST THE RULES! WE RUN THE DOCKS!

THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG, ADDIE--

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

THIS CITY BELONGS TO **BIG BOY CAPRICE!**

FLATTOP... LEMME...LEMME HELP YOU...GIMME A CHANCE...

A CHANCE? DUKEY, DUKE-- YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE.

BUDDA BUDDA

THE TIME FOR NEGOTIATIN' IS **OVER,** PAL...

"...BIG BOY CAPRICE DOESN'T NEED ANY FRIENDS."

YOUR VISIT... SURE WAS A SURPRISE.

NOT LIKE I'M GOING AROUND LOOKING FOR FRIENDS.

ESPECIALLY FRIENDS LIKE YOU.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS AND ALL THAT, BIG BOY.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, WE HAVE QUITE A LOT IN COMMON. A SHARED THREAT OR PROBLEM, IF YOU WILL.

AND HIS NAME IS DICK TRACY.

BUT DICK TRACY IS THE KIND OF PROBLEM BREATHLESS MAHONEY KNOWS HOW TO FIX-- FOR GOOD.

YER GETTIN' PARANOID IN YER OLD AGE, *ITCHY.*

WHO CAN BLAME ME? FEELS LIKE TOMMY GUN FIRE IS JUST A NORMAL SOUND ON THESE STREETS.

LIPS IS BACK IN TOWN, GUNNIN' FOR BIG BOY. NOW BIG BOY'S GOT FLATTOP ON HIS OWN KILLIN' SPREE.

ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER FREAKIN' *GANG WAR.*

BUT WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE *ME?* I JUST WANA COOK BIG BOY'S BOOKS IN *PEACE!*

KNOCK! KNOCK!

THUMP! THUMP!

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I'M COMIN'!

NOW, YOU KNOW THE RULES--GIMME THE *PASSWORD*!

WELL? ANYONE THERE?

KRRRKK!

NGGGHHH!

AW, JEEZ, LISSEN--

WHERE...

KRRNNNCH!

...IS...

...FLATTOP?!

THWUMP!

WHERE CAN I FIND FLATTOP FUCKING JONES, ITCHY. NOW.

SHOULDERS... I...I DUNNO...

YOU KNOW THAT'S *NOT* GOOD ENOUGH.

I SWEAR! I SWEAR! YOU COULD KILL ME AND I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TELL YA!

NO ONE TALKS TO FLATTOP! NOBODY BUT THE BOSS!

JUST ***BIG BOY!***

GLLURRGHH!

KRRNNK!

THEN YOU TELL BIG BOY WE WANT HIS LITTLE LAP DOG.

OR ***EVERYONE*** HE KNOWS ***DIES.***

YOU'RE LEAVIN' ALREADY?

MY EDITOR JUST CALLED-- BUNCH OF BODIES FLOATED UP DOCKSIDE--***LIPS MANLIS'*** GOONS, TOO. INCLUDING HIS TOP GUY, ADDIE GOTHORN.

I'M SORRY, KID, SOMETIMES I FORGET YOU'RE-- WELL--A KID.

I'M JUST DISTRACTED. AND ***WORRIED.***

WITH ***LIPS MANLIS*** BACK IN TOWN, THERE'S ZERO CHANCE THE GANGS WILL MAKE NICE AND CARVE THINGS OUT.

I GET IT. NEW BOSS, SAME AS THE OLD BOSS.

SORT OF. A GANG WAR IS BAD FOR EVERYONE--BUT BIG BOY CAPRICE AND LIPS MANLIS AREN'T KNOWN FOR PLAYING NICE.

AND SOMEONE'S GOTTA TELL THAT STORY. MIGHT AS WELL BE *ME*.

NOW FINISH UP YOUR BREAKFAST, OKAY? GET YOURSELF TO SCHOOL THIS TIME, OR--

YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT *HIM*, AREN'T YOU?

ABOUT *DICK TRACY*?

YES. YES I AM.

HE'LL BE OKAY. *DICK TRACY'S* TOUGH. A REAL HERO.

YES, BUT EVEN THEN-- HE'S JUST A MAN. AND MEN CAN BE HURT.

NOT TRACY, MISS TRUEHEART.

"DICK TRACY'S INVINCIBLE. NOTHING CAN STOP HIM."

YOU SURE WE'LL FIND THE CREEP HERE?

NOT SURE OF ANYTHING THESE DAYS, SAM--BUT MY INFORMANT SAID OUR GUY LOVES A GOOD CLAM CHOWDER.

AND THE OWNER AT FORD'S MAKES THE BEST CLAM CHOWDER IN THE CITY, BY A GOOD MILE.

STONEY BRONZEN?

YEAH? WHO'S ASKIN'?

AW, SHIT.

YOU EVER GET TIRED OF PUNCHING THESE GOONS, SAM?

NOPE. NEVER.

OOOFFF!

LOOK, LOOK-- I DON'T KNOW NOTHIN'!

HUH?

THAT'S A DOUBLE NEGATIVE. MEANS YOU DO KNOW SOMETHING.

I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. STONEY, YOU EITHER TALK OR I SPREAD WORD THAT YOU'RE LOOKING TO RUB OUT LIPS MANLISS AND TAKE OVER HIS OPERATIONS.

WHAT?! I WOULDN'T DO THAT! I'M A NOBODY, I'M A--

THEN STAY A NOBODY. TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT--LOOK. IT'S BIG BOY. HAS HIS HANDS IN THE LOCAL UNION. HE'S BASICALLY RUNNIN' THE SHOW OVER THERE.

EVERYWHERE YOU TURN THESE DAYS, THERE HE IS. CAPRICE IS EVERYWHERE.

EVERYWHERE BUT NOWHERE. WE DON'T EXPECT TO YOU TO TELL US WHERE HE IS.

BUT YOU WILL TELL US WHERE HE'S KEEPING HIS DOG CHAINED UP.

WHERE'S FLATTOP?

LISTEN, I DON'T--

NOT AN OPTION.

OKAY! OKAYOKAYOKAY!

HE DOESN'T STAY ANYWHERE LONG, BUT FROM WHAT I'M HEARING...

"...HE'S STAYING DOWN BY THE DOCKS. IN A BIG OL' WAREHOUSE. YOU CAN'T MISS IT."

YOU REALLY THINK WE'RE GONNA FIND HIM HERE?

EVEN LUNATICS HAVE TO LAY THEIR HAT *SOMEWHERE.* AND IF WE HAVE TO TURN OVER EVERY ROCK IN THIS CITY TO FIND FLATTOP...

...THEN THAT'S WHAT WE'LL DO.

ONE, TWO...

WHAT THE...

...HELL?

WHAT *IS* THIS?

IT'S A *GAME*...

...AND WE JUST LOST. STONEY, OF ALL PEOPLE, TRICKED US.

WE'RE TOO DAMN *EAGER*, AND FLATTOP KNOWS IT.

SAY...

...THIS DOUGH IS *REAL*. WHY WOULD HE PUT REAL MONEY INSIDE OF A *FAKE* DOLL? SEEMS LIKE AN AWFUL WASTE.

...SAM, IF I'VE LEARNED ONE THING...

...IT'S THERE'S NO TELLING *WHAT* GOES ON A MANIAC'S MIND, AND THAT GOES DOUBLE FOR FLATTOP.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE...

"...THIS PLACE *STINKS*."

HELLO? YEAH, CHIEF? WHOA, SLOW DOWN--SLOW DOWN. I GOT IT, YEAH--I GOT IT. HE'S RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.

WE'RE ON OUR WAY.

MMMMMMMM

PAT, GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU. SAM AND I WORKED A LOCAL SNITCH, AND HE LED US...WELL, WE GOT TOO EAGER, BUT--

SIDDOWN, TRACY.

WE FOUND SOMETHING, CHIEF--

I SAID SIT DOWN.

OKAY. WHATEVER YOU SAY, CHIEF.

LOOK, TRACY, THERE'S NO EASY WAY TO SAY THIS, SO I'M JUST GONNA SAY IT.

THERE'S BEEN SOME ACCUSATIONS AGAINST YOU. ACCUSATIONS OF YOU SKIMMING MONEY FROM THE EVIDENCE LOCKER--AND I CHECKED IT OUT MYSELF.

THERE IS MONEY MISSING FROM SOME OF YER CASES.

THE MONEY. THAT'S WHY FLATTOP STUFFED THE POCKETS. HE WANTED ME TO FIND IT.

GOD DAMN IT, DICK! THESE ARE *SERIOUS* ACCUSATIONS!

WAIT A SECOND, PAT--

YOU DON'T *BELIEVE* THIS, DO YOU?

IT'S MY *JOB* TO PURSUE ANY ACCUSATION OF POLICE CORRUPTION--YOU KNOW THAT. ESPECIALLY GIVEN WHO OUR *LAST* CHIEF WAS.

PEOPLE ARE SAYING YOU'VE GONE CROOKED. THEY'RE SAYING YOU'RE IN BED WITH *LIPS MANLIS.*

HE DID SAVE YOUR LIFE, DICK.

I'VE NEVER STOLEN SO MUCH AS A NICKEL *MY ENTIRE LIFE.* MY ENTIRE LIFE. AND I'M NOT GOING TO SIT HERE AND LISTEN TO VAGUE ACCUSATIONS FROM A MAN WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS. A MAN WHO USED TO BE *MY PARTNER.*

I KNOW, I KNOW. I'M IN A TOUGH SPOT. THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT YOU IN. WHAT'S BEING SAID...IT LOOKS BAD. SO I'M GIVING YOU A WARNING, AS YOUR CHIEF *AND* YOUR FORMER PARTNER--

WATCH YOUR BACK OUT THERE. SOMEONE'S GUNNING FOR YOU.

HEY THERE, TRACY...

...THAT'S ONE EXPENSIVE CAMPFIRE YOU'VE GOT GOING THERE.

COST MORE THAN YOU THINK.

YOU OKAY, PARTNER?

SAM... THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE.

I CAN FEEL IT. IT'S THERE, SOMEWHERE ON THE PERIPHERY. STALKING, MOVING IN SLOWLY...

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT I KNOW IT'S THERE.

AND I KNOW IT'S COMING FOR US.

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.

...AND SO, WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, I'M PROUD TO INDUCT ALL OF YOU...

...INTO THE CITY'S POLICE FORCE!

HOORAY!

"AND YOU, YES YOU--"

--CADET *TRACY*. I EXPECT BIG THINGS FROM YOU. *BIG* THINGS.

I APPRECIATE THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, CHIEF BRANDON.

I'LL TRY NOT TO LET YOU DOWN.

I'M SURE YOU WON'T, MY BOY. I'M SURE YOU WON'T.

OH, YES. I ALMOST FORGOT.

YOU.

SHAME YOU COULDN'T MAKE THE CUT, LAD. REAL SHAME. THOSE PSYCH EXAMS...THEY ARE QUITE IMPORTANT.

BUT I DO HAVE *GOOD* NEWS FOR YOU...

...THERE IS A ROLE FOR YOU. A DIFFERENT KIND OF ROLE, REPORTING TO ME AND ME ALONE. IT'S MADE FOR SOMEONE EXACTLY LIKE ***YOU.*** SOMEONE WITH YOUR UNIQUE FRAME OF MIND. SOMEONE...

...WHO'S WILLING TO DO A ***DIFFERENT*** KIND OF POLICE WORK.

To Be Continued...

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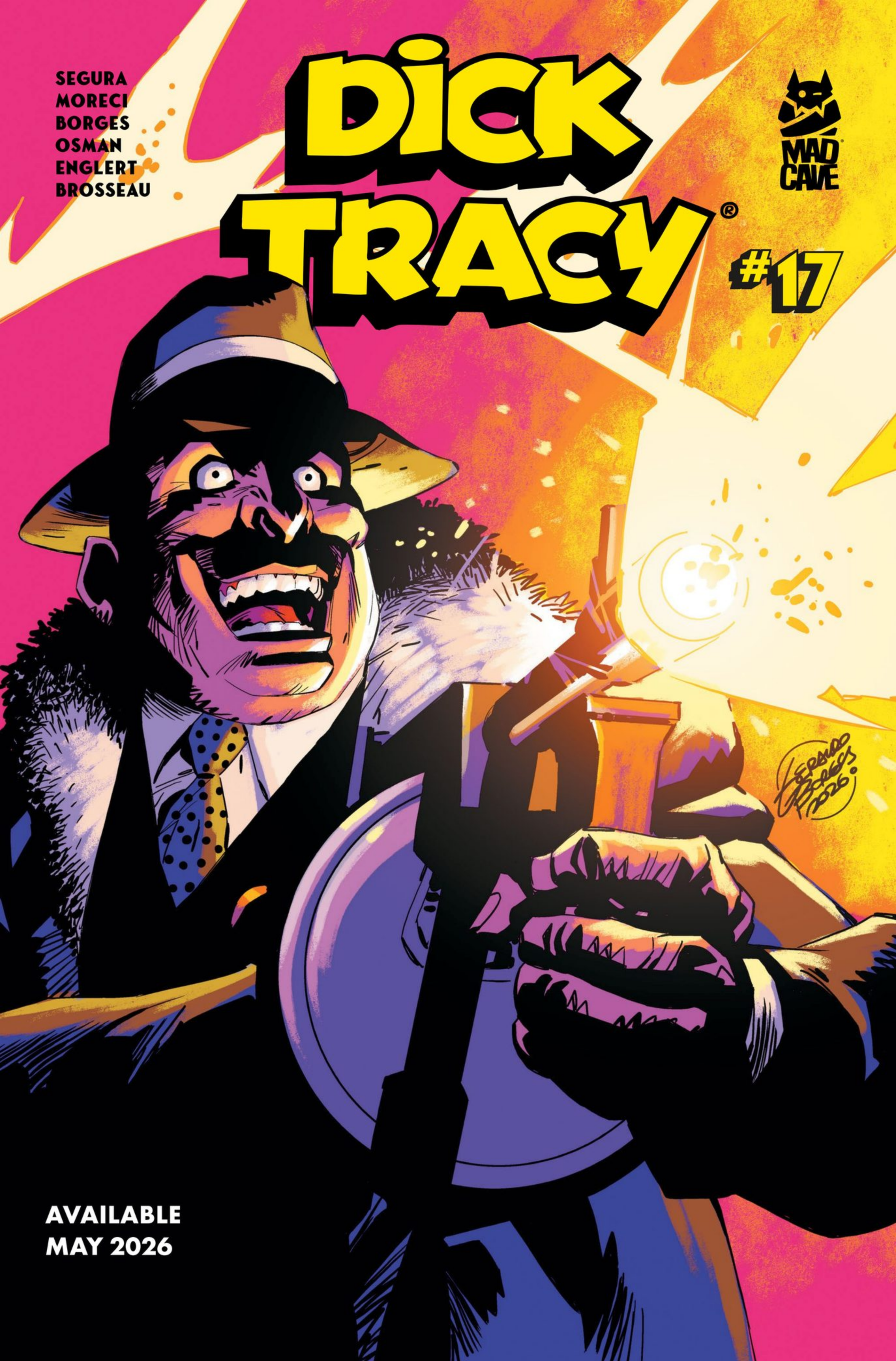

AVAILABLE
MAY 2026

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No. 1

"FEARLESS" FRED KENNEDY + JAMES "EDWARD" CLARK

THE LASER DRUG FORCE IN THE Florida HIPPOPOTAMUS Cocaine MASSACRE

"HAPPY CABBAGE."
"ANGEL DANDRUFF."
"SPLIFF MAGRIFF."
"GOOD TIME JIB JAB."
STREET DRUGS HAVE MANY NAMES.
BUT THEY'RE ILLEGAL...
...AND MAKE NO MISTAKE...
...THEY WILL KILL YOU!
AND NO ONE WILL BOTHER COMING TO YOUR FUNERAL.
THEY'LL BE TOO EMBARRASSED.
I'M FIRST LADY, MANDY LASER.
AND I'M HERE TODAY TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE TERRIFYING WORLD OF...
THERE STANDS THE GLASS...
AND NOW A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY
...ILLEGAL DRUGS!
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING...
..."BUT, MANDY I'M SIXTEEN."
"I HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS IN THE WORLD."
"WHAT'S A HOOT OFF A MARIJUANA CIGARETTE GONNA DO TO ME?"
WELL TAKE A LOOK AT THIS, MISS SMARTY TEATS!
THIS HI-FI VIDEO CASSETTE WILL SHOW YOU WHAT DRUGS REALLY DO...
...ASIDE FROM MAKING BABY JESUS CRY!
THEY WILL RUIN YOUR ENTIRE LIFE! AND THE LIVES OF EVERYONE YOU LOVE.
CAN SOMEONE FIX THIS GODDAMNED THING!
IT'S DOING THAT BLURRY THING AGAIN!
NO WONDER WE'RE LOSING TO THE SOVIETS...
...WE CAN'T EVEN BUILD A WORKING VCR!
BAM
FINALLY! IT'S ON!
NOW NOBODY BLINK, OR YOU MIGHT MISS SOME OF THE HIGH CONCENTRATION OF AMERICAN VALUES...
...AND SUBLIMINAL MARKETING FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR...
THE FLORIDA HIPPOPOTAMUS COCAINE MASSACRE

IN A FARAWAY LAND CALLED "FLORIDA" THERE'S A PLACE WHERE THE IMMORTAL MUSIC OF THE 1970s MEETS SEMI-AQUATIC AFRICAN MAMMAL CONSERVATION CREATING AN UNFORGETTABLE VACATION DESTINATION FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

DISCO-HIPPO Wonderland

DISCO
HEY THERE, GANG! WELCOME TO DISCO HIPPO WONDERLAND!
FLAMINGO CITY'S PREMIUM ANIMAL THEMED AMUSEMENT PARK!
ALSO KNOWN AS THE SWELLEST AND WHOLESOMEST PLACE ON EARTH!
DISCO HIPPO
ENTER

LOOK, IT'S DEFECATING!

FINALLY! THE PILLS ARE KICKING IN!

U-S-A! U-S-A!! U-S-A!!!

MAKE THEM PLAY THE PIANO, DAMMIT!

I PAID FIVE DOLLARS TO BE HERE!

NOW REMEMBER, NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY!

IT COULD SEND THEM INTO A MURDEROUS RAGE.

SOME PEOPLE WOULD CALL HIPPOPOTAMI THE *COOLEST* AMPHIBIOUS MAMMAL AROUND...

...BUT IF YOU ASK ME THEY'RE PRETTY...

HIP

BIARF

HA HA HA HA HA

THEY'RE JUST LIKE US!

SUCH WHOLESOME LAUGHTER.

I'M STEALING THAT JOKE!

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING AT?

WHAT THE--

OH MY STARS!

LOOK, EVERYONE! A CLOUD!

WELL, HIPPO-HELPERS...

...LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR AN EXTRA DISCO-TASTIC DAY!

...BECAUSE THAT'S FLAMINGO CITY'S MOST FAMOUS CITIZEN!

AND THE FOUNDER OF DISCO HIPPO WONDERLAND...

...JANS M'JOR "DISCO" DISCAU!

NEVER GOON

DADDY, WHY AM I SUDDENLY SO COLD?

QUIET, BOY...

WE LIVE IN FLORIDA, DADDY..

WHY AM I COLD?*

...NOW THERE'S A PARAGON OF AMERICAN VIRTUE!

A TRUE SPECIMEN OF *EXCEPTIONALISM!*

*INTERNALLY RELIVING TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD EVENTS? -FRED

HHHISSSSS

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